(ii) Prescribing time-frame for admission of complaint, issue of notices and disposal of complaint;

(iii) Exclusion of services availed for commercial purposes;

(iv) Recovery of compensation amount ordered by the redressal agency through certificate case as arrears of land revenue;

(v) Provision for issue of interim orders by the redressal agencies;

(vi) Establishment of consumer protection council at district level.

(d) Yes, Sir.

Rice Scam in FCI godowns

1234. SHRI KHAGEN DAS:
SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Rs. 2 crore rice scam has been unearthed by the Food Corporation of India (FCI) in its godowns in Punjab;

(b) whether the local FCI officials had allowed sub-standard quality of rice to be transported for distribution under the PDS to New Cooch Behar in West Bengal;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) what steps have been taken to apprehend the culprits

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. During the investigation of a complaint, it was detected that 2395 MTs of rice common (Boiled) loaded in the special Ex-Beas (out of Dhilwan stocks) on 26.1.2001, in fact, was loaded directly by two millers. Initially the consignee staff/officers at Cooch Behar in West Bengal Region, in connivance with the millers, and the FCI staff of Dhilwan, acknowledged the receipt of the said stocks and intimated receipt of

only 86 bags of sub-standard rice by submitting a loss assessment statement for only Rs. 4105.60. Subsequently on a joint inspection and analysis of the stocks in question, it was revealed that sub-standard stocks had been received at Cooch Behar on 7.8.2001 against special No. 119 despatched Ex-Beas (out of Dhilwan stocks) on 26.1.2001. The consignee on the basis of this joint sampling/ analysis results, submitted a revised Loss Assessment Statement amounting to Rs. 20,48,353.31.

(d) On the basis of findings of the investigation report, major penalty proceedings were initiated against the then District Manager, Kapurthala and after completing the inquiry proceedings the penalty of dismissal was imposed on him.

Major penalty proceedings have also been initiated against 2 Category-I and 19 Category-II/III officers/officials in both Punjab and West Bengal Regions. The case has also been handed over to CBI for investigation.

Decentralization of foodgrains procurement and storage

1235. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA':
SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether at a meeting of the State Chief Minister and Food Minister the question of decentralization of foodgrains procurement and storage was discussed;

(b) if so, whether most of the State Governments opposed the move on the ground of inadequacy of funds and on the ground that minimum support prices of foodgrains were fixed by the Centre; and

(c) what was the outcome of the discussions and the likely saving in the Food Corporation Bill as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) and (b) The issue of decentralised procurement of foodgrains was discussed in the